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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Substantive session of 2003

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 49th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 25 July 2003, at 10 a.m.

President:	Ms. RASI (Vice-President)	(Finland)
later:	Mr. ROSENTHAL (President)	(Guatemala)

CONTENTS

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS (continued)

(a) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(b) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(d) HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (continued)

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CONTENTS (continued)

(g) PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(i) UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS (continued)

(l) TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS (continued)

SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (continued)

(a) ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (continued)

(b) SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(c) CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued)

(e) UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (continued)

(f) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE THIRD DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued)

(g) HUMAN RIGHTS (continued)

(h) PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES (continued)

IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 52/227 AND 52/12 B (continued)

SUSPENSION OF THE SESSION

In the absence of Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala), Ms. Rasi (Finland), Vice-President, took the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS (agenda item 13) (continued)

(a) SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (continued) (E/2003/29)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the recommendations contained in the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development (E/2003/29), the programme budget implications of which were contained in document E/2003/L.32.

Draft resolution on future programme, organization and methods of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, draft resolution I, contained in chapter I, section A of the report

Mr. SETH (Secretary of the Council) said that the word "*Decides*" in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution should be replaced by the words "*Recommends to the General Assembly*".

The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted.

The PRESIDENT drew the Council's attention to the text without a symbol that had been circulated containing two draft decisions that she had submitted on the basis of informal consultations on decisions 11/1 on the status of non-governmental organizations and other major groups accredited to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and 11/2 on the Bureau of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Both the original draft decisions, which were contained in chapter I of the report had been adopted by the Commission and required action by the Council. In each case, the text that had been circulated would defer further consideration to the resumed session of the Council.

Mr. BENMELLOUK (Observer for Morocco) suggested that the last part of each of the proposed texts should be reworded to read: "... decides to defer further consideration of this matter to its resumed session of 2003".

Mr. TOSCANO (Observer for Switzerland) said it was unclear whether the two draft decisions submitted by the Vice-President were intended to replace the draft decisions in the report by the Commission on Sustainable Development, in view of the fact that the Council would take note, in each of the draft decisions, of the respective decisions by the Commission.

The PRESIDENT explained that the two draft decisions she had submitted would not replace the decisions recommended by the Commission on Sustainable Development but merely defer their consideration. She took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft decisions she had submitted, as orally amended by the representative of Morocco.

It was so decided.

(b) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/58/74-E/2003/58)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take note of the report of the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union on the preparations for the World Summit on the Information Society (A/58/74-E/2003/58).

It was so decided.

(d) HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (continued) (A/58/8; E/2003/L.12)

Draft resolution on coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda (E/2003/L.12)

Ms. NASCIMBENE de DUMONT (Argentina) said that the activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium should take place in conformity with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and the resolutions of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee relating to specific territories. Such activities should exclude the participation of alleged authorities of territories regarding the sovereignty of which there was a recognized dispute.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the agreed text of the draft resolution based on informal consultations on E/2003/L.12 and replacing the text of that draft resolution.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take note of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (A/58/8).

It was so decided.

(g) PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (E/2003/L.17 and L.45)

Draft resolution on public administration and development (E/2003/L.45)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the draft resolution (E/2003/L.45) that she had submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on E/2003/L.17.

Mr. SETH (Secretary of the Council), after having informed the Council that the words "*Takes note of*" should be replaced by the word "*Notes*" in paragraph 1, said that, if the draft resolution was adopted, the Council would decide that the Committee of Experts on Public Administration would meet annually for one week, instead of biennially for two weeks. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 already included a provision of US$ 170,700 to cover the travel expenses and daily subsistence allowance of the members of the Committee.

While the decision to change the periodicity and the duration of the sessions would not require additional conference services, it would require, if estimated at full cost, an additional sum of US$ 58,300 for travel expenses and daily subsistence allowances. In the context of the General Assembly review of the proposed programme budget, however, the Secretary-General could, if necessary, modify the work programme with a view to absorbing additional requirements within the level of the initial proposals made, so that the draft resolution to be adopted by the Council would have no financial implications.

Ms. GOICOCHEA ESTENOZ (Cuba) requested a written copy of the oral statement made by the Secretary on the programme budget implications. While her delegation did not object to the adoption of the draft resolution, it had some reservations about its

programme budget implications, mainly because the Council was not in a position to assert that the additional budgetary requirements resulting from its adoption could be absorbed by the programme budget.

The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted.

(i) UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS (continued) (E/2003/42)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the draft resolution and the three draft decisions contained in the report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its third session (E/2003/42) and recommended for adoption by the Council.

Draft resolution on the Trust Fund for the United Nations Forum on Forests

The PRESIDENT said that, as agreed during the informal consultations, the words "country-led initiatives" in the fifth preambular paragraph should be replaced by the words "and other meetings aimed at supporting the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests". In addition, the words "*Recommends that the General Assembly*" should be inserted at the beginning of paragraph 2. The full text of the draft resolution had been circulated during the informal consultations.

The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted.

Draft decision on the date and venue of the fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (draft decision I)

The draft decision was adopted.

Draft decision on the report of the United Nations Forum on Forests on its third session and provisional agenda for its fourth session (draft decision II)

The draft decision was adopted.

Draft decision on intersessional work by ad hoc expert groups (draft decision III)

The PRESIDENT said that, as had been agreed at the informal consultations, a number of revisions had been made to the annex to draft decision III. Copies of the revised text had been circulated. In the first place, the words "government designated experts" had, in all instances, been replaced by the word "experts". Secondly, in the first paragraph of the subsection entitled "Composition and participation" (para. 4), the words "in accordance with the decision to which this annex is attached" had been inserted between commas after the word "experts". In addition, a new paragraph (a) bis should be inserted to read:

> "*Decides* that the meetings of the ad hoc expert groups on approaches and mechanisms for monitoring, assessment and reporting, and on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, shall be convened in Geneva from 8 to 19 December 2003. The Council also decides that the date of the meeting in New York of the ad hoc expert group on 'consideration, with a view to recommending the parameters of a mandate for developing a legal framework on all types of forests' shall be decided at the resumed session of the Economic and Social Council of 2003."

Draft decision III, as orally revised, was adopted.

(l) TRANSPORT OF DANGEROUS GOODS (continued) (E/2003/46)

Draft resolution on the work of the Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the changes that had been agreed upon in the informal consultations to the draft resolution contained in chapter I of the report of the Secretary-General (E/2003/46). Copies of the changes had been circulated in a document without a symbol. She took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft resolution, as thus revised.

It was so decided.

SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (agenda item 14) (continued)

(a) ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (continued) (E/2003/27)

Draft resolution on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, draft resolution I, contained in chapter I, section A, of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women (continued) (E/2003/27)

Mr. ESCUDERO (Ecuador) informed the Council that his delegation had intended to vote in favour of draft resolution I on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women contained in the report of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/2003/27). However, it had been absent when the voting had taken place.

(b) SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/58/67-E/2003/49; A/58/61-E/2003/5)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take note of the report on the preparations for and observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family in 2004 (A/58/67-E/2003/49) and of the report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (A/58/61-E/2003/5).

It was so decided.

(c) CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (continued) (A/58/87-E/2003/82)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the preparations for the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (A/58/87-E/2003/82).

It was so decided.

(e) UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (continued) (E/2003/68)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take note of the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (E/2003/68).

It was so decided.

(f) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE THIRD DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued) (A/58/80-E/2003/71)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the Programme of Action for the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and follow-up to the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (A/58/80-E/2003/71).

It was so decided.

(g) HUMAN RIGHTS (continued) (E/2003/23/(Part. 1))

Mr. REYES RODRÍGUEZ (Cuba) said that Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/13 on the situation of human rights in Cuba did not help to foster international cooperation in that regard. Designed to constitute a pretext for the continuation of the blockade of Cuba by the United States of America, it contained a completely inaccurate reflection of the situation in his country. His delegation disassociated itself from that resolution and refused to cooperate in its implementation.

Mr. DUQUE ESTRADA MEYER (Brazil) said that his delegation had abstained from voting on resolution 2003/13 for the reasons it had expressed to the Commission on Human Rights at the time. Had the resolution been put to a vote by the Council, it would have abstained once again.

Mr. SHEN Yongxiang (China) said that resolution 2003/13 was typical of the repeated attempts to exert political pressure on the Government of Cuba, which poisoned the atmosphere of human rights dialogue. His delegation had voted against the resolution because it was always opposed to attempts by powerful countries to bully smaller ones into submission. He expressed its solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba.

Ms. SUNDBERG (Sweden), referring to the Council's decision on the right to development (originally draft decision 24, contained in the report of the Commission on Human Rights chapter I, section B), said that her delegation had abstained from voting on the relevant resolution by the Commission, because it opposed the preparation of a conceptual paper on the

right to development by the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. It had, however, voted in favour of renewing the mandate of the Working Group on the Right to Development, which was the appropriate forum for the ongoing discussions on that issue.

(h) PERMANENT FORUM ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES (continued) (E/2003/43 and 72; E/2003/L.47)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (E/2003/43). Chapter I, section A, of the report contained seven draft decisions recommended by the Forum for adoption by the Council. She had submitted new texts for draft decisions II, III and VII, based on the results of recent consultations.

Draft decision on the workshop on the collection of data concerning indigenous peoples (draft decision I).

The draft decision was adopted.

Draft decision on the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2006 of the Economic and Social Council (draft decision II).

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the new text she had submitted for draft decision II. She took it that the Council wished to adopt that text.

It was so decided.

Draft decision on the participation of members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council (draft decision III)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the new text agreed on during informal consultations for draft decision III. The word "open" before the word "invitations" in the penultimate line should be deleted. She took it that the Council wished to adopt the draft text, as orally revised.

It was so decided.

Draft decision on the Bureau of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (draft decision IV)

The draft decision was adopted.

Draft decision on the venue and dates for the third session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (draft decision V)

The draft decision was adopted.

Draft decision on the provisional agenda and documentation for the third session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (draft decision VI)

The draft decision was adopted.

Draft decision on the proposal for a second international decade of the world's indigenous peoples (draft decision VII)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to consider the new text agreed on during informal consultations for draft decision VII. She took it that the Council wished to adopt that text.

It was so decided.

Draft decision on the review of indigenous issues within the United Nations system (E/2003/L.47)

The draft decision was adopted.

Mr. LEHMANN (Observer for Denmark) said that he wished to express his delegation's satisfaction with the work of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. While the report (E/2003/43) provided an indication of the enormity of the tasks before the Forum, it also highlighted the competent way in which the members of the Forum, with the assistance of the no-less competent secretariat, were discharging their role. The active dialogue between the Forum and the various United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and the pertinent recommendations it addressed to the United Nations organs was an indication of the way in which it was establishing its authority on indigenous issues within the United Nations system. He commended the Forum for its restraint in having submitted only seven recommendations to the Council.

Lastly, he pointed out that his Government had recently announced a financial contribution of 1 million Danish kroner to the Forum's voluntary fund. There were no strings attached to that contribution, which was the first of its kind. He hoped that other countries would support the Forum at a time when it was struggling with a very heavy workload.

Ms. ABD AZIZ (Malaysia) said she wished to thank the delegation of Finland, as the delegation of the Vice-President responsible for the segment, for the excellent way in which the consultations on the draft decisions recommended by the Permanent Forum had been carried out, particularly in view of the fact that the proposed changes had proved to be quite contentious. Her delegation was equally grateful to the delegation of Sweden for having facilitated the informal consultations on the issue.

Ms. SUNDBERG (Sweden) said her delegation would like to express its gratitude to all the delegations that had participated in the informal consultations for their active contribution and flexibility, which had resulted in the adoption by consensus of all of the draft decisions put forward by the Permanent Forum.

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on information concerning indigenous issues requested by the Economic and Social Council (E/2003/72).

It was so decided.

IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 50/227 and 52/12 B (agenda item 8) (continued)

The PRESIDENT said that consideration of agenda item 8, including consideration of the proposal for an "Economic and Social Council Award", was deferred to the resumed substantive session.

SUSPENSION OF THE SESSION

The PRESIDENT said that, since consideration of a number of issues had been deferred, a resumed substantive session of the Council would be held in the autumn of 2003.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala), took the Chair.

The PRESIDENT said that there had been achievements in each of the Council's segments. During the high-level segment, the policy dialogue with heads of financial and trade institutions of the United Nations system had focused on the consequences of the Doha Development Round and the prospects for the Cancún Ministerial Conference of the World

Trade Organization (WTO). Development prospects were dependent upon further progress in implementing the Doha Agenda, particularly with regard to the world trade in agricultural products. The subsequent discussion had taken the innovative approach of placing rural development in the context of the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summits.

During the operational activities segment, the Council had underlined the importance of a solid financial basis for United Nations operations. The coordination segment had offered a comprehensive response to recent requests from the General Assembly for enhanced coherence and system-wide cooperation. The humanitarian affairs segment had made significant progress in improving understanding of the links between humanitarian assistance and development. Under the general segment, he highlighted the discussion concerning African countries emerging from conflict, which had shown the potential for collaboration between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council on issues relating to the transition from conflict to development. The Council had also introduced some changes to decisions and resolutions adopted by its functional commissions, with a view to ensuring greater coherence in economic and social affairs.

Mr. CIVILI (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs) said that implementation and integration were the two overriding concerns that had emerged for the 2004 substantive session. The Council was uniquely placed to ensure that the unprecedented consensus emerging from the Millennium Declaration was translated into effective action.

After the customary exchange of courtesies, the PRESIDENT declared the substantive session of the Council suspended.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.